with the defence expenditure in Pakistan, China and other neighbouring countries and how does it relate to the country's needs, keeping in view the developments in the neighbouring countries; and

(d) in what manner Government propose to maintain balance of military power to meet any eventuality?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI ARUN SINGH): (a) Government have seen media reports in this regard.

(b) and (d) Government keep a constant watch on acquisition of major defence equipment by neighbouring countries, which has a bearing on our security, with a view to take appropriate measures for full defence preparedness. It will not be in the public interest to disclose details of the various steps taken by Government in this regard.

(c) According to the information contained in the Military Balance published by the International Institute of Strategic Studies, London, the defence expenditure as a percentage of the GNP of the following neighbouring countries, during 1983, was as under:—

Pakistan	—	6.9 per cent
Bangladesh	—	2 per cent
Indonesia	—	3.5 per cent
Nepal	—	1.40 per cent

Relating figures for China are, however, not available. The relevant figures for India are 3.4 per cent for 1983 & 3.8 per cent for 1985-86. The level of defence expenditure in India reflects a reasonable balance between our defence and development needs.

Doordarshan programmes on religious/ ideological issues

*458. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what was the total time the Doordarshan had devoted to religious programmes on the National Network during 1985 and 1986 till date; and

(b) whether Government have any policy or increasing the number of programmes on issues pertaining to secularism and socialism, if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) A total duration of 15 hours 48 minutes in 1985, and 9 hours 27 minutes upto end of November, 1986 have been devoted to programmes on religious festivals telecast on the National network including Delhi and relay transmitters.

(b) In keeping with the principles of socialism and secularism enshrined in the Constitution, Doordarshan is already telecasting adequate number of programmes on these subjects. Similarly all the important festivals of the various denominations and also programmes designed to benefit all sections of society, especially weaker sections are telecast.

International convention of civil and political rights

*459. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has ratified the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and how they envisage 'freedom of information'; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to grant such freedom of information to Indian citizens?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) and (b) India has acceded to the International Convention Civil and Political Right with certain reservations necessitated by our Constitutional and legal systems.